



Encyclopaedia Aristasiana

Find in Entire Site Go

Menu

Home
Search
List pages
Last Changes

 Image Galleries

Main Sections

Aristasian Glossary
Aristasian Life and Culture
Aristasia Pura
Aristasia in Telluria
Philosophy and Religion
Sound and Kinematics
Telluria Criticism

Random Pages

Quirinelle
Vintesse
Animal Thesis
Aristasian Form:
Questions and Answers
Arcadia
The Culverian Question
The Philosophy of
Numbers and
Measurements
The Way of the Sword

Search

in:
Entire Site Go

Login

Login as...
User:

Password:

Login

Standard | Secure

 Backlinks...

Forms of Address

As with many questions about Aristasia, the form of address depends somewhat on what part of Aristasia one is in.

However, in general and especially for Western Aristasians and Aristasians-in-Telluria, the following can be taken as minimal guidelines.

The normal way to refer to someone is as "Miss (Surname)". There is no differing title for married or unmarried ladies or for the sexes, so it is very simple. Miss is, of course, short for "Mistress". In some areas the full form is used, but that will not concern us at present. In some cases also "Miss" is not used for Paccia as they are not mistresses.

A little further east one adds the honorific "chei" or "chen" to a name, so one says (Surname)-chei.

Only if one knows a person very well will one use Miss (First name) or (First name)-chei/chen.

First name without Miss or chei/chen (or other title) is reserved for:

- * Children
- * Close (equal or inferior) family members
- * Very intimate friends
- * Some distinct and intimate inferiors (protégées or little-sisters, some servants)
- * Some hierarchical inferiors

Some schoolgirls among themselves drop "Miss" but not "chei". Chei can be modified to the intimate form "cheri" in some cases.

Many of us have very close friends whom we have never addressed - and would not dream of addressing - by first name alone.

Surname without Miss or chei/chen (or other title) is very rare and should normally be avoided except by those who know exactly what they are doing and are very familiar with the particular protocol. Wrongly used it is considered very insulting. It is used in some military contexts, some

brunette schools and with some servants in some areas. Otherwise it is to be avoided.

Aristasians-in-Telluria do not refer even to Tellurian public figures by surname alone unless they are a) male AND b) dead. "Shakespeare" is allowable, but "Austen" (for Jane Austen) is not.

The English translation of the very important Essentialist book *Symboles fondamentaux de la science sacrée* (*Fundamental Symbols of Sacred Science*) actually omits "M." and "Mme" and represents the author as referring to other writers by surname alone. To an Aristasian (as to any civilised) ear, this is deeply shocking and has led some English-speaking Aristasians to struggle with the book in the original French rather than be offended by the English version.

Specific Forms of Address

The rule that one should address a person by her highest title is certainly valid and, when addressing her, one calls:

- * The Empress "Imperial Majesty"
- * A Queen "Your Majesty"
- * A Princess "Your Highness"
- * A Duchess or High Priestess "Your Grace"
- * Other ranks of nobility "My Lady"
- * A Priestess "Matri" (mother)
- * A high-level teacher, or Eastern nobility, "Raya"
- * A military officer "Noble (rank)" or "Honoured (rank)"

Other titles are normally preceded by "Honoured". Descriptions that are not specifically titles are also used sometimes with appropriate traditional adjectives replacing "Honoured", such as:

- * "Honoured Teacher"
- * "Learned Doctor"
- * "Gallant Captain"
- * "Noble Defender" for a military guard - strictly one of officer class, but it may sometimes be applied to an ordinary guard in accordance with the tendency to give a person more honour than her due.

Note that some Aristasian societies are very strict and honour must be exact, but for Western/Tellurian usage this will not normally arise and the rule of over-honouring (within reason) is a safe one.

The term 'Rayalin' will sometimes be encountered. It is hard to translate into English. It could be rendered "Person of high birth", or "Lordly lady". It is not used for people of actual nobility. It may be used in addressing a group or meeting in the form "Rayalini" or "Mel Rayalini". If nobles are present, one may use the traditional formula "Rayani yt

Rayalini".

"Ma'am" may be used in addressing a superior directly. In formal speech, honorifics are used often. If one is showing very high respect one will use them each time one addresses a person. Lesser degrees of respect still demand frequent use, especially at the beginning of a conversation. In such cases, after using "My Lady" a few times, "ma'am" may be used for brevity, though reverting to "My Lady" if one wishes to intensify respect or is saying something that might be taken slightly amiss.

"Ma'am" is regularly used by shop assistants and other public servants who do not know the rank of the person whom they are addressing, but must address them as a superior since they are serving them.

"Ma'am" is also used among equals in formal speech: each party humbly addressing the other as if she were a superior.

Notes

Use of "dear" in letter salutations:

While using "Dear" in letter salutations is perfectly acceptable for an Aristasian-in-Telluria, in Aristasia Pura (whose usages some of us adopt) it tends to be used only for those who really might be dear to one. The correct address to an editor with whom one was personally unfamiliar would be "Honoured Editor", or to a business associate "Honoured Miss Joans"

To one's mother one would write "Dear Mummie" or to one's childhood friend "Dear Sushuri-cheri".

On "chei" and "chen":

The honorific suffix *chei* is used in some parts of the East and is especially associated with the noble Rayapurhi dialect. In the nearer East - and much of the further where different forms altogether are not used - it is more usually *chen*.

About a century ago, some circles in the Novarian capital, Nevrayapurh, adopted the *chei* form as proper to "New Rayapurhis". Some people consider this an affectation but it is still often heard in the Capital, and for this reason is sometimes considered in the West to be the correct Estrenne (or at least Novarian) usage. Actually, in most of Novaria and the bordering Eastern lands, *chen* is much more common. In West Novaria, "Miss" is also frequently used and one even sometimes hears the two combined, as in: "Miss Joans-chen".

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